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WORLD CATTLE NUMBERS IN 1947 AND 1948

World cattle numbers on January 1, 1948 are estimated at 724 million head, about 100,000 head more than in the preceding year. Significant decreases in North America, South America and Western Europe were more than offset by increases in the Soviet Union and Oceania. The present numbers are only slightly below the 5-year 1936-40 average of 726.4 million head, which was relatively high compared with earlier periods.

At the beginning of 1948, North America had about 110 million head, about 3.2 million fewer cattle than in 1947. Europe and South America, with over 93 and nearly 117 million head, respectively, had about 800,000 and 700,000 less cattle. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, had over 3 million more cattle and Asia, Africa and Oceania, with moderate increases. had 1.5 million more cattle than a year earlier.

In North America, South America and Europe, cattle numbers decreased principally because of the unfavorable supply of grain and feed crops which in turn were in part responsible for heavy marketings of cattle in 1947. At the same time, the increase in cattle numbers in the Soviet Union reflects a rebuilding of herds after extensive war losses as well as good grain and feed crops. The improved feed position in Asia, Africa and Oceania, also favored expansion in 1947.

CATTLE: Estimated world numbers, by continents, averages 1931-35 and 1936-40, annual 1944-48

Continent or area		Aver 1931-35		:	1944	:	1945	:	1946		1947 1/	1948 <u>1</u>
	:		Thou-	:	21100	:	21100	:	2	: -	Thou- sands	Thou- sands
North America Europe Soviet Union		2/107,100 2/36,900	59,800	:	94,700	:	91,800	:	91,300	:	94,000	93,200
Asia South America Africa	:	104,900	283,200 105,600 60,700	•	109,900	:	113,600	:	116,900		117,300	116,60
Oceania Total	:		18,100	-			_			\sim		

^{1/} Preliminary. 2/ Not strictly comparable with later years due to territorial changes. 3/ Estimate included in world total.

Significant changes in cattle numbers have occurred in the various regions of the world between the 1936-40 period and the beginning of 1948. During this period, cattle numbers in North America increased by 13 million head, South America by 11 million head, and Africa and Oceania by 5.8 and 0.8 million head, respectively. But, in the same period, and as a result of the war, cattle numbers in Europe dropped by 9.2 million head, Soviet Union by 10 million head, and Asia by 14 million head. The total decreases for the period were slightly larger than the total increases, resulting in a net world decrease of over 2 million head.

During 1947, cattle numbers decreased principally in United States, Western Europe, and some of the South American countries. In the United States, marketings during the year were heavy because of reduced feed supplies, strong consumer demand, and high prices received by farmers. In many of the Western European countries, a general feed shortage, further augmented by the drought in the latter part of last summer, resulted in considerable liquidation of cattle. Several of the South American countries, because of strong domestic and foreign demand, experienced heavy marketings and slaughter.

Restoration of cattle numbers in many of the countries will require several years of more than average supplies of feed. Other countries, with relatively low numbers, could materially increase cattle numbers by adopting improved feeding and breeding practices, better management practices and disease control methods. An increasing world population with its increasing consumer demand for beef puts an unusually heavy drain on the cattle resources of the world.

Cattle numbers on farms and ranches in the <u>United States</u> on January 1, 1948, were estimated at 78,564,000 head, compared with 81,207,000 head a year earlier, a drop of 2,643,000 head, or 3 percent. Numbers at the beginning of the year were about 18 percent above the 1936-40 average, but 8 percent below the peak of January 1, 1945, and the lowest since 1942. Except for a slight increase in heifers kept for milk, all classes of cattle decreased from the preceding year. Slaughter of cattle and calves reached a new high in 1947. However, the decline in numbers and the high rate of slaughter can be attributed primarily to (1) high prices received by farmers, (2) continuance of strong consumer demand for beef and yeal, and (3) higher-priced and reduced quantities of feed supplies.

In Canada, cattle numbers on farms at the beginning of 1948 were reported at 8,950,000 head, a decline of about 1 percent from the recently revised figure for a year earlier. These numbers are about 8 percent larger than the 5-year average for the 1936-40 period. Since the slaughter-house strike of last autumn ended, there have been and still are relatively heavy marketings. The increase in marketings was due to higher prices, resulting from removal of price ceilings (now reimposed) and cattlemen being urged by the Dominion's Department of Agriculture to sell marginal stock. Heavier marketings are expected to continue until pastures are ready, because of the shortage of grain.

CANADA: Number of cattle on farms, by principal classes, 1939-1947

		June			December	, Y
Year	Milk	Other	Total	Milk	Other	Total
	cows	cattle	10001	cows	cattle	
	Thou-	Thou-	Thou-	Thou-	Thou-	Thou-
	sands	sands	sands	sands	sands	sands
1939	3,681	4,693	. 8;374	3,933	4,291	8,224
1940	3,650	4,730	8,380	3,917	4;399	8,316
1941	3;624	4,893	8,517	4,002	4,247	8,249
1942	3;680	5;265	8,945	3,832	5,002	8,834
1943	3,795	5,870	9,665	3,953	5 , 553	9,506
1944	3,930	6,416	10,346	4,088	6,170	- 10;258
1945	3,998	6,761	. 10,759	4,013	5,948.	9,961
1946	3,711	5,954	9,665	3,717	5 , 299	9,016
1947	3 , 697	6,021	9,718	3,667	5,277	8,944

Compiled from Livestock Surveys for June 1 and December 1.

Cattle numbers in <u>Cuba</u> at the beginning of the year were apparently close to 4 million head, about one-fifth below the 1936-49 average. This decline continues the downward trend which began in 1942. Better than average pasture conditions during the dry season have enabled the cattlemen to keep relatively large numbers of cattle moving into market. As a result of better grazing conditions, slaughter weights in 1947 and at the beginning of 1948 are reported to be considerably higher than in the previous years. The currently strong consumer demand and high prices continue to place a heavy strain on the cattle industry.

By June of 1947, cattle numbers in Mexico were believed to be approaching 13 million head. Since the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in December 1946, the Mexican-United States border has been closed to export of live cattle. The retention of these cattle and normal increases probably will more than offset slaughter losses, resulting from carrying out of the foot-and-mouth disease eradication program.

Argentine cattle numbers of July 1947 were believed to have been maintained at or near the 1945 level, but present numbers are likely to be somewhat higher. However, ranchers in a wide area in the southwestern part of Buenos Aires Province are reported to be reducing cattle numbers for the reason that dry conditions continue to prevail. But, for the most part, fairly good grazing conditions exist in most of the cattle country. The continuance of a strong domestic demand and the possibility of price adjustment should strengthen prospects and aid in the maintenance of cattle numbers. Under the new Anglo-Argentine arrangement, the market for export steers may be strengthened to some degree for the reason that the United Kingdom can no longer share her contract purchases with other European countries. Consequently, if these countries desire Argentine beef, purchases must be made directly from Argentina.

In 1947, cattle numbers in <u>Brazil</u> were reported to have shown a downward trend, but numbers were estimated to be about 13 percent above the 5-year average for the 1936-40 period. Even though there are more cattle than during prewar, a meat shortage still prevails throughout the country. Exports apparently continue to be prohibited, except for the Rio Grande do Sul area. Cattle in the Rio Grande do Sul area are reported to be thin and slaughtered at low weights. Delay in making adjustments in ceiling prices is reported to be holding back production in that particular area.

Cattle numbers in <u>Uruguay</u> appear to have made a steady recovery from the 1943 drought. Present numbers are estimated at 7 million head, compared with about 6.2 million head at the end of 1943, and 6.8 million head reported in the Agricultural Census for May 1946. Unusually good grazing conditions and a plentiful supply of water at this time point toward favorable cattle-raising prospects in 1948. However, increased acreages of grain crops, particularly wheat and flax, and further development of the dairy industry, may tend to reduce cattle numbers.

Political unrest and uncertainty within Paraguay have led to a decrease in cattle numbers and are retarding expansion of the industry. Cattle numbers at the beginning of the year were unofficially estimated at about 3.4 million head, somewhat larger than the 1936-40 average. However, according to some observers, government stability, improved animal breeding practices and disease control could, within a reasonable time, double present cattle numbers.

Peruvian cattle numbers at the beginning of 1948 were estimated at 2,662,000 head. This is a slight increase over a year earlier and more than 40 percent above the 1936-40 average. The continuing strong consumer demand and low official prices in relation to other foods appear to preclude any increase in numbers for some time.

Notwithstanding inadequate supplies of domestic and imported feeds, the cattle numbers in the <u>United Kingdom</u> have remained relatively constant during the past four years. The most recent data indicate that numbers in 1947 dropped around 62,000 head below June 1946, but are approximately 800,000 head above the 1936-40 average. During the war and post-war period, dairy cattle, because of the need for milk supplies, were given priority and a more liberal feed allowance than were the beef animals. Under the Agricultural Expansion Program, it is proposed to increase numbers. Fixed prices for livestock products have been announced and minimum prices are guaranteed through 1952. The program of prices is expected to up cattle numbers and generally to stabilize marketings.

UNITED KINGDOM: Number of cattle on farms, by principal classes, 1939-1947

Date	Cows and heifers in milk Thou-	Cows in calf but not in milk Thou-	Heifers in calf Thoù-	Two years old and over Thou-	One year and under two Thou-	Under one year Thou-	Total Thou-
1939 - June - December	2,841 2,434	<u>sands</u> 480 917	564 580	1,342 1,260	sands 1,867 1,721	sands 1;778 1,861	8,872 8,773
1940 - June	2,849	488	621	1,415	1,857	1,863	9,093
- December	2,556	944 -		1,351	1,757	1,842	9,073
1941 - June	2 , 878	. 524	586	1,282	1,893	1,777	8;940
- December	2 , 447	945	713	.1,205	1,649	1,741	8,700
1942 - June	2,809	588	802	1,339	1;693		9 ,075
December	2,416	· · 1,104	684	1,334	1,549		8 , 998
1943 - June	2,910	640	774	1,356	1,726	1,853	9,259
- December	2,418	1,174	628	1,428	1,674		9,233
1944 - March	2;520	1,062	806	1,466	1,640	1,915	9,409
June	2;927	653	794	1,475	1,770	1,882	9,501
September	2;736	870	761	1,494	1,751	1,916	9,528
December	2;385	1,171	604	1,563	1,650	1,957	9,330
1945 - March June September December	2;525	1,002	781	1,566	1,650	1,912	9,436
	2;918	625	800	1,630	1,814	1,829	9,616
	2;700	867	774	1,580	1,785	1,807	9,513
	2;403	1,111	645	1,633	1,695	1,820	9,307
1946 - March	2;549	953	864	1;599	1,657	1,807	9;429
- June	2;919	618	885	1;683	1,747		9;629
- September	2;673	885	838	1;699	1,695		9;597
- December	2,450	1,100	626	1;598	1,604		9,238
1947 - March - June - September - December	2;559 2;897 2;658 2,415	970 643 934 1,117	818 843 80 5 624	1,640 1,678 1,749 1,568	1,708 1,699	-1;810 1;798 1;805 1,907	9;376 9;567 9;650 9,218

Compiled from Agricultural Statistics and Monthly Digest of Statistics.

In <u>Eire</u>, cattle numbers in June 1947 dropped below the 1936-40 average, the lowest number for many years. Decreases are reflected in all classes, except 3-year olds and upwards. Consequently, with a considerable decline in milk cows and heifers in calf, it is likely that cattle numbers in 1948 will be lower than the 1947 numbers.

At the beginning of 1948, cattle numbers in Denmark were still continuing the downward trend and were 14 percent below the 1936-40 average. Last summer's

drought, inadequate feed imports and high production costs were the principal factors which adversely affected cattle numbers during 1947. Cattle slaughter in the last half of 1947 was almost 49 percent larger than in the comparable 1946 period. The total calf slaughter, however, was somewhat smaller than in 1946, but such slaughter on farms seems to have been larger in 1947. Mild weather during the winter and favorable growing conditions this spring have benefited pastures and fall-sown grains. If favorable growing conditions continue, this will permit early grazing and alleviate to some extent the acute domestic and imported feed shortage.

DEMLIARK: Number of cattle on farms, by principal classes, 1939-1947

						-
	Date	Cows	Heifers	Calves under one year	Bulls and oxen	Total
		Thou- sands	Thou- sands	Thou— sands	Thou- sands	Thou- sands
1939	- July	1,614	659	852	146	3,271
	- December	1,618	587	850	131	3,186
1940	- July	1,591	635	862	138	3;226
	- December	1,511	563	783	119	2,976
1941	- July	1,462	622	795	135	3;014
	- December	1,403	558	760	112	2,833
1942	- July	1,391	604	749	126	2;870
	- December	1,385	545	728	102 -	2,760
1943	- July	1,436	619	804	119	2;978
	- December	1,469	565	792	107	2,933
1944	- March	1,527	643	737	126	3,033
	- July	1,530	655	833	119	3,137
	- December	1,532	581	819	104	3,036
1945	- March	1,550	674	756	111	3,091
	- July	1,550	679	841	114	3,184
	- December	1,536	613	797	95	3,041
1946 <u>1</u> /	/ - March	1,592	690	737	105	3,124
	- July	1,594	667	801	105	3,167
	- December	1,560	596	758	90	3,004
1947 <u>1</u> /	/ - March	1,613	650	706	100	3;069
	- July	1,538	626	727	96	2;987
	- December	1,410	524	663	71	2,668

Compiled from Statistiske Efterretninger.

1/ Includes cattle in parishes and boroughs, which totaled 50,000 head in December 1946.

Cattle numbers in <u>Sweden</u> in 1947 dropped almost 3 percent below comparable 1946 data and are now about 94 percent of the 1936-40 average. Heavy marketings and slaughter occurred in the summer of 1947, due to the drought that caused a shortage of pasture feed and forage. Inspected slaughter increased 2.5 percent over the previous year. This, however, does not include farm slaughter and some illegal marketings. <u>Norway</u>, in 1947, had some decline in cattle numbers because of a serious drought and generally limited feed supplies.

In 1947, cattle numbers in the <u>Netherlands</u> declined about 3 percent, and are now about five-sixths of the 1936-40 average. Heavy marketings and slaughterings occurred in the fall of 1947 as a result of last summer's drought. The largest decrease in numbers took place in the 2-year old and under classes. During the winter months, owing to the below average rate of slaughter, fat cattle were imported from Ireland (Eire) and Denmark and frozen meat from Argentina to maintain the present low meat rations. A mild winter, however, is providing early grass which is benefiting small farms as it supplements the very limited winter fodder. But recently a frost damage is reported to have set pastures back.

Belgian cattle numbers, reflecting the shortage of feed in 1947, declined 4 percent from a year previous and are now 8 percent below the 1936-40 average. The largest decrease occurred in dairy cow numbers, a drop of 8 percent from a year earlier. The slaughter rate of dairy cows is now greater than before the war, while the number of cows are 20 percent less than prewar. Large dairy imports, shortage of farm labor, price policy and competition from the Netherlands are given as the chief causes of the downward trend in cow numbers. At the present time, feed prospects appear more encouraging since earlier than usual pasture seems to be assured.

Notwithstanding feed shortage, heavy marketings and slaughterings during the latter part of the year, cattle numbers in France in the fall of 1947 were almost the same as a year earlier, or about 97 percent of the 1936-40 period. The slight downward trend, however, is expected to continue until this spring and until an expected increase occurs in feed supplies. It is reported that the total weight of live animals is nearly 20 percent below prewar and 7 percent below the preceding year. Recent information indicates that a mild winter and partial revival of pastures in January and February have enabled farmers to slow up liquidation of large cattle.

Cattle numbers in Spain, according to the best available information, seem to be somewhere near the 1946 level. The reported general scarcity and high cost of feed will preclude any immediate sizeable rebuilding of cattle numbers. At the present time, there is a tendency on the part of farmers to sell young cattle because of a tight feed situation and the continuing strong demand for meat. It is indicated that the total available meat supplies during the next 12 months will be far short of consumer demand. In 1947, Portugal is believed to be maintaining cattle numbers near the 1936-40 average. Inadequate supplies of beef and veal and increasing meat and cattle prices can be expected to encourage an increase in cattle numbers, unless a drought occurs.

In Germany, cattle numbers in the four zones as of December 1947 were below those reported a year earlier. This decline reflects the reduction that has taken place as a result of the attempt to bring numbers in line with available feed supplies. The holding down of cattle numbers enables authorities to conserve as much as possible of the available grain supplies for direct human consumption. Poland, on the other hand, is believed to have increased cattle numbers over the preceding year and they are now assumed to be somewhere near three-fourths of the 1936-40 average. Shortage of feedstuffs and a relatively high disease rate have permitted only a moderate increase in numbers.

In <u>Switzerland</u>, cattle numbers in April 1947 showed a decline from the preceding year and were about 13 percent below the 1936-40 average. The general reduction in Swiss cattle numbers was due to the war and difficulties encountered in obtaining feed, particularly during the 1946-47 winter. Shortage of breeding heifers, slaughter of breeding animals and fewer livestock owners indicate that cattle numbers may show further decreases before the trend levels off.

The acute shortage of fodder in <u>Czechoslovakia</u> resulting from last year's prolonged drought, necessitated a considerable reduction in cattle numbers. Numbers at the beginning of the year were estimated at 3,260,000 head for the entire country, the smallest on record. In addition to the feed shortage, disease is said to have affected about 14 percent of the cattle. The Government indicates that numbers and pasture areas are to be increased because there are insufficient skilled farmers available to produce grain crops, especially in the Sudetan area where German farmers were expelled.

Hungarian cattle numbers in the spring of 1947 showed a considerable increase over the preceding year. Present numbers are believed to be about three-fourths of the 1936-40 average. Since last spring and during the latter part of 1947, however, cattle experienced a temporary setback due to excessive slaughter, resulting from a shortage of fodder following the drought. The scarcity and high price of feed seems to be the principal hurdle to cattle number recovery.

Rumanian cattle numbers in 1947 are believed to have been maintained close to the 1946 level and are now around four-fifths of the 1936-40 average. The severe drought of 1946 and lack of fodder during the subsequent winter apparently set the cattle industry back considerably. It is estimated that with the availability of sufficient feed, 5 to 6 years will be required for rebuilding cattle numbers. If current favorable conditions continue, it is indicated that there should be some increase in 1948 supplies.

Although only limited data are available from Yugoslavia, it is assumed that a substantial increase occurred in cattle numbers during 1946 and 1947. This conclusion is based on the knowledge that favorable crop and feed conditions prevailed in 1947 and that their 1947-1951 (5-year) plan calls for a systematic increase in cattle numbers.

In Italy, cattle numbers in 1947 showed a considerable increase over a year earlier. These numbers are somewhat larger than the 1936-40 average and probably will be maintained in 1948. Although cattle numbers in Greece began to show recovery in 1945 and 1946, the poor feed situation and internal difficulties in 1947 have halted, if not reversed, the recovery trend. Marketings have been heavy in many instances, including draft stock and breeding animals. Bulgarian cattle numbers at the beginning of the year were estimated to be above the 1936-40 average.

The limited information available indicates that the <u>Soviet Union</u> is making considerable progress in the rebuilding of cattle herds which were devastated or reduced during the war years. The increase in cattle numbers in 1947 particularly reflects good grain and feed crops. Although there has been a considerable increase, the numbers, however, are substantially below those contemplated under the 5-year program.

In Africa, cattle numbers at the beginning of 1948 showed a slight increase over a year earlier. This increase occurred principally in North Africa and is attributed to a somewhat improved feed position following the drought years. Madagascar and Southern Rhodesia numbers are believed to have been barely maintained in 1947. Cattle numbers in the Union of South Africa in 1947 are believed to have been held near the 1946 level. Years of drought or near drought conditions, disease, and many years of heavy marketings and slaughterings have imposed an unusual drain on cattle numbers. Permanent pasture program of rotational grazing is highly desirable and needed, but scarcity and high cost of fencing materials preclude any sizeable undertaking. Nevertheless, it is believed that a slow, steady increase in cattle numbers can be anticipated unless drought again breaks the trend.

Cattle numbers in Australia, as of March 1948, are expected to show a slight increase over a year earlier. Numbers now, however, are almost 4 percent larger than the 1936-40 average. With an abundance of feed and a strong demand for cattle, the numbers in all probability can be maintained and possibly increased in 1948. However, restocking, according to reports, has been limited, owing to shortage of suitable breeding lines and the high price of breeding stock.

Somewhat improved grazing conditions in the 1946-47 season and in 1948 throughout most of New Zealand will probably assure the maintenance and perhaps a slight increase in cattle numbers. According to early 1947 data, young cattle of 2 years and under were the only classes that increased among the dairy cattle, but all classes of beef cattle, except bull and steer calves under one year, showed an increase over a year earlier.

Cattle numbers in Asia totaled 268.5 million head in 1947, the largest since 1944, but were still about 5 percent below the 1936-40 average.

Moderate increases occurred principally in China, Burma, Philippines and Korea as a result of an improved feed position. On the other hand, decreases were believed to have taken place in Turkey and Japan.

This is one of a series of regularly scheduled reports on world agricultural production approved by the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations Committee on Foreign Crop and Livestock Statistics. For this report, the Committee was composed of J.A. Becker, Chairman, C.M. Purves, Elmer A. Reese, Hazel B. Kefauver, Karen J. Friedman, Mary E. Long, Constance H. Farnworth.

CATULE: Numbers in specified countries sverages 1931-1935 and 1936-10, anmal 1943-1948

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